

Problems for Brothers and Sisters

SOUTH CAROLINA'S NEWSWEEKLY

January 10, 1974
Twenty-Five Cents

OSCEOLA

From Cactus Quave to Citizen Quave



**Columbia's
folk hero...**

See page six

Pro
News

25



PHOTOS BY DAVE LACKEY

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osceola

"Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one."

—press critic A.J. Liebling

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Feiffer

I AM A CONGRESSIONAL LEADER.

I GO WITH THE WIND.

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS FAVORABLY ON WATERGATE I FANCY WATERGATE.

WHEN THE WIND CHANGES I SAIL AWAY.

WHEN THE WIND STALLS OVER RECESSION I HOVER ELOQUENTLY OVER THE BALANCED BUDGET.

WHEN THE WIND DRIFTS TOWARD ROCKEFELLER I DRIFT ACCORDINGLY.

FOR MY WIND IS NOT THE UNSTEADY BLUSTER OF PUBLIC OPINION.

MY WIND IS THE INEXHAUSTIBLE GALE FORCE OF LOBBIES AND HIGH FINANCE.

SO, TO ALL YOU FRESH-MEN CONGRESSMEN, HEED MY ADVICE: MAKE MY WIND YOUR WIND.

IT IS THE OLDEST WIND IN TOWN.



COMING:

Next week Osceola honors Strom Thurmond (right) and other South Carolina public servants in our first ever Dubious Honors and Awards issue. Available on Columbia newsstands January 17.

1975. UGH!

Christmas is over; Notre Dame beat Alabama; the Watergate Five got theirs; and a whole new year is here. So what, you say.

What with inflation, crime, layoffs, recession and the President playing in a winterwonderland while we feel the heat, you say, "What the hell, what's the use?"

Well, we at Osceola want to brighten your new year a little bit. Three weeks ago we offered our readership the chance to give a gift subscription to any of their friends for \$4; that's half our regular \$8 subscription price. We had intended to only make this offering once, but the response we

received has convinced us that many more of you might want to take advantage of this special offering.

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Cheap Shots

Unplugging the TV idea

Things are beginning to pop in the forthcoming Edwards administration. *State* newspaper governmental affairs reporter Bob Liming left his post with the *State* to become Governor-elect Edwards' press secretary.

With Liming came the hope expressed by many State House reporters that some semblance of order would be forged out of the seemingly chaotic attempts by Edwards' aides to form a new government.

A visit by an *Osceola* staffer to Edwards' temporary offices on the second floor of the Wade Hampton office building found Liming busily preparing his first press release. The release concerned Democratic Lt. Governor Brantley Harvey's announcement that he favored the televising of legislative sessions by S.C. Educational Television. Harvey had told a press conference that a two week trial period would cost \$17,000, admitting that to fully implement the program would cost substantially more.

Liming's press release asked the proposal be given "more study" because, as some of Edwards' staff members pointed out, implementation of the project on a permanent basis, "would cost an initial one million dollars in capital outlay and then three to four hundred thousand a year."

"With unemployment reaching ten percent in this state do we need to spend millions on a television show?" one Edwards staffer asked.

But a more basic cause of irritation on the part of Edwards' staff stems from the fact the while ETV chief Henry Cauthen met with Brantley Harvey and helped formulate the proposal. Cauthen either forgot or consciously avoided letting Edwards know what was being planned. So Edwards' staff was taken by surprise when they were called on by the press to comment on Harvey's proposal. Perhaps Cauthen forgot that it's Jim Edwards, not Brantley Harvey, who sits on the Budget and Control Board which decides appropriations each year.

One of the more interesting aspects of Edwards' temporary office is the lack of space he has been given by whoever hands out such space.

In one 12X20 office are: Marshall Cain, former House member from Aiken County and



Edwards

Harvey

Ferillo

recently appointed Edwards aide; Carroll Campbell, also one of Edwards' top aides; and Roger Kirk, Edwards' advisor on matters relating to education and Liming.

The quarters are so cramped that Edwards' people are constantly having to ask each other to move or to pass one of the only two telephones. Edwards' people simply chalk it up to a general lack of state office space, but they are still somewhat amused and at the same time irritated by one aspect of their temporary quarters.

Facing, if that is the correct word, on eye level straight into the only window in the office is the rump of the statue of General Wade Hampton's horse which the good general straddles. The statue's posterior practically fills the entire vista afforded by the window.

Of course Edwards' staff is trying to take it lightly. "I just tell 'em to come to where the horse's, er...butt is," Marshall Cain quipped.

Those Good 'Ole Days

As the warden told Paul Newman in *Cool Hand Luke* while kicking the blue-eyed wonder's molars down his throat: "What we have here is a failure to communicate."

It is this overused, but perhaps relevant, observation which the legislature is about to realize. In the year of Watergate, in the year when South Carolina voters allegedly rejected the old politics for the likes of Pug Ravenel it seems that the South Carolina legislature will remain true to its Pavlovian image, salivating at the sound of former speaker of the House Sol Blatt's name.

The issue which brings all this into focus is the selection of a judge to fill the vacancy soon to be created by the departure of 14th Circuit Judge William Rhodes to the state's Supreme Court. The legislature will meet in joint session to select Rhodes' successor sometime soon after they

reconvene on January 14.

In recent weeks it has become apparent that a large segment of the legislature has committed itself to one candidate for that job. Former Chairman of the S.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and Hampton attorney Clyde Eltzroth announced a few weeks ago that he had 114 of the legislature's 170 members committed to vote for him.

While no one has questioned Eltzroth's qualifications as a jurist, what they do question is the wisdom of appointing a man to a position of public trust who left the last such position he held under the cloud of scandal.

In 1972 Governor John West requested and received Eltzroth's resignation from the Wildlife Commission after press reports of political favoritism and other questionable practices occurring within Eltzroth's agency.

The State, upon learning of Eltzroth's bid for the judgeship, published editorials on two separate occasions which questioned the wisdom of choosing Eltzroth for the position in light of his difficulties while commissioner of the Wildlife Commission. The editorials also backed resolutions passed by several bar associations of counties in the 14th Circuit requesting public hearings on the qualifications of candidates for the job.

The legislature may not heed *The State's* advice, though. Newly elected representative I.S. Leevy Johnson, a Democrat from Richland County's House District 74, told *Osceola*, "I personally don't put too much credence in what *The State* newspaper says.

They're trying to set themselves up as a super-government. They always have a vested interest in what they do. One member of their editorial staff was the president of the (Columbia) Chamber of Commerce and the president was out advocating liquor by the drink. Whatever *The State* newspaper is for, I'm usually against just on that basis."

While Johnson said he favored Eltzroth, "because he is a hell of a lawyer," the Richland County legislator indicated that he could also support Gerald Smoak, an attorney from Walterboro, who recently entered the contest for the post.

The rest of the members of the Richland County delegation who were contacted by *Osceola* said that while they might have tendencies to vote for a specific candidate they would rather have public hearings before any such vote is taken.

Rep. John LaFitte (D-Richland) prefled a bill which would make such hearings a statutory requirement.

Sources in the State House indicate that the chances of such hearings ever being held are "slim." The legislator, who didn't wish to be identified, said, "Sol Blatt, Sr. and Buster Murdaugh (14th Circuit Solicitor) are pushing Eltzroth. They're twisting arms and calling in favors. It's just like the old days."

"The old days" of which this solon spoke were supposedly eradicated by the wave of reform which swept South Carolina last year. But perhaps old Sol and his cronies didn't get the word. Perhaps there was a failure to communicate between them and their constituency.

Crucial year at the PSC

The South Carolina Public Service Commission is one of the more powerful agencies in the state, by virtue of the fact that it

controls the policies of several large state-sanctioned monopolies. Because of the recent -- and seemingly omnipresent -- power rate increase hearings, most people are probably familiar with the PSC's role in setting the power companies' prices and policies. The PSC also has jurisdiction over telephone companies, the state dairy industry, railroads, bus lines, and gas and sewer services throughout the state, and must approve any rate increases for those companies.

Essentially, the seven PSC commissioners have the power to determine how much profit the various "public service" monopolies can make. The commissioners are elected to four-year terms by the General Assembly, and can serve an unlimited number of terms.

1975 could be a very crucial year for the commissioners, because five of the seven are up for re-election -- Henry G. Yonce, Abney A. Smith, Guy Butler, Fred A. Fuller, Jr., and J. Lewis Moss. But it probably won't be. The re-election of PSC commissioners is generally considered a foregone conclusion, much like the renomination of an incumbent President by his party. One

(Continued on page ten)

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Brothers and Sisters: an old problem

by Melissa Pruitt

It has been eight years since Clay Normand came to Columbia and founded the local chapter of Brothers and Sisters, an organization designed to prevent juvenile delinquency. Those years have been both frustrating and rewarding because Brothers and Sisters has offered a haven for inner-city children in need of friendship and a place to go, and frustrating because the gains made have been so hard-earned.

Now the young executive director has to face an additional frustration, one that plagues many private charitable organizations at present — not enough money. The fact that others are finding money to be a scarce commodity does little to ease Normand's frustration. The situation has gotten to the point where Normand is considering quitting.

Brothers and Sisters is a program for youngsters up to 14 years of age, aimed at keeping them out of trouble. The children come to the center on Lincoln Street — a big, faded two-story house — where they either match up with an older "brother" or "sister," or they join one of the activity and discussion groups.

Unlike similar agencies, Brothers and Sisters hasn't had any problem attracting enough volunteer "brothers" and "sisters." In fact, there are now 342 volunteers participating in the program, providing guidance and friendship to 560 children. The reason for that success, Normand says, is that Brothers and Sisters does not require volunteers to be perfect. To the contrary, he explains, the organization has found that adults who experienced problems when they were younger are often able to understand their little brothers' and sisters' problems. "The way I see it," Normand relates, "a person that has had some kind of problem — say, with drinking or drugs — and has overcome the problem, has a lot to offer."

Brothers and Sisters has similarly been successful in drawing attention to the need for juvenile delinquency prevention, and it has received countless letters of commendation from national figures such as former President Nixon and from state leaders such as Senator Fritz Hollings, Governor John C. West, and Lt. Governor Earle Morris. But, to Normand, the

letters of praise are not enough — they do not promise financial support.

Brothers and Sisters has explored many unsuccessful paths for proper funding. Last year the South Carolina Department of Youth Services offered to fund the program, but in return the house on Lincoln Street had to be closed. Normand accepted the offer and for the first time he and his staff were earning sizeable salaries.

But moving to a new building created problems for the kids. "There were rules and regulations that made the kids dissatisfied," Normand said. "For example, they weren't allowed to bounce balls on the wall. And they (Youth Services) had me going to meetings all the time. The kids began to think I didn't care about them." Normand had to make a choice — either accept the terms of the Department of Youth Services, or run Brothers and Sisters in a way he felt would most benefit its participants. Brothers and Sisters moved back to Lincoln Street after three months.

Normand still feels he made the right decision. "We think we are able to fulfill needs with our program as it is. We help both children and parents. State regulations which require that buildings allow so many square feet per child just don't make sense to us," says the executive director.

Several years ago Normand formed a board to help the agency in its search for funds and to spread the word about Brothers and Sisters. The board boasts many prominent Columbia citizens, including pastors of some of the city's largest churches (both black and white) and judges from the family court. But even dealing with the board has become frustrating. Many members do not attend meetings and the anticipated resignations of a few exceptionally hard working members will weaken the effectiveness of the board, Normand thinks.

Columbia area churches have been financially generous to Brothers and Sisters, and Normand is quick to praise their efforts. "But," Normand says, "we have a potential budget of \$60,000 and so far for 1975 we have only raised \$2,000."

Brothers and Sisters has fulfilled its goal of preventing juvenile delinquency in many cases, Normand feels. He says, "I wish you could see the group we started with. Most of the girls are now about 16 and none of them are pregnant. That is really something, considering some of their backgrounds."

Many state agencies have acknowledged what is being done by Brothers and Sisters and now refer people to the program or take referrals from Brothers and Sisters. "We have a working relationship with the agencies and we don't criticize how they work. It is too time consuming and too frustrating," Normand said.

It is easy to understand why Normand is feeling frustrated. His program is a recognized success, statewide and nationally, yet there are still no offers to fund the



PHOTOS BY MELISSA PRUITT AND BOB THOMPSON

program as it exists. Normand says, "It is frustrating year after year being trapped with financial burdens." But he believes in Brothers and Sisters so much he doesn't want to abandon the program.

At the same time, Normand feels an obligation to himself and his personal life. He said he thinks he owes it to his parents and his future to get some kind of job security, but Brothers and Sisters is not able to offer him a decent salary. Normand is torn between his duty to his own life and his strong desire to help young people. If the frustrations continue, the temptation to take another job may become overwhelming.

For the moment Normand and one other staff worker are receiving a salary from the mayor's office, which had some excess funds. But the salaries end in March, and then what? "It seems like we always get down to practically nothing and then something comes along right in time to keep us going a little longer." His hopes for the present lie with the newly elected governor and a new bill passed by Congress. Governor-elect Jim Edwards has expressed his support of volunteer programs many times, and workers at Brothers and Sisters plan to approach him for help on this basis.

The new crime prevention bill passed by Congress provides funds for programs already in existence. Once the law goes into effect, Brothers and Sisters will apply to receive money. "The bill is made for programs like ours," says Normand, who does not think he will run into the same problems he met in dealing with the state.

"It is fun what we do here, and we are needed by the community," says Normand. "Brothers and Sisters is not run on textbook theories or on the findings of studies. Instead, it deals with the reality of contemporary life. Brothers and Sisters has helped many troubled youngsters — why won't someone help them?"



Clay Normand



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NATIONAL TOPICS

TRB
FROM WASHINGTON

An incredible year

In 50 years of Washington reporting this has been the most dramatic year I have ever known. Historians will come to it with a sense of disbelief, and for us who saw it unfold at first hand, week by week, hour by hour almost, there was the same incredulity.

That day last August in the White House, for example, when they put into our hands the transcript of the Nixon-Haldeman taped conversation of June 23, 1972; I could read it but I couldn't grasp it. Nixon instructed Haldeman to order the FBI: "Don't go any further into this case, period." Why, it amounted to a confession of obstruction of justice. Why, it meant he had been lying all the time. Why, it meant this was the end.

"This was a serious act of omission for which I take full responsibility and which I deeply regret," the statement said. Who was saying that? The President himself.

Events came like that, one after another, faster and faster, stretching through six months; some played in conferences, some on TV before the whole nation, and all centered on one theme, the unmasking, the humiliation, the ruin of the most powerful man on earth.

The year opens with the Arab oil embargo, rising inflation, vice president Ford on *Meet The Press* attacking critics of the president's refusal to comply with subpoenas, and President Nixon telling Congress that "there will be no recession." Cheers. But all the time the doomed man knew what was in those tapes. Eighteen minutes of them had been expunged but there was damning evidence left, and the investigators were closing in.

As we watched day by day the tension rose. Experts said there had been multiple tape erasures. The subpoena for the other tapes would be pressed in the courts. The House was turning its Judiciary Committee loose with an unknown chairman named Rodino to hold impeachment hearings. Sen. Sam Ervin, the latter-day Founding Father, had held his televised hearings the summer before. It shook the Nixon popularity rating, but always there was the other side, too: Gerald Ford and minority leader Hugh Scott announcing that secret data cleared the president: "I know from our conversation," Ford reported, "that the President had no prior knowledge of the Watergate break-in or had any part of the cover-up."

Ziegler told us the President intends to stay. Mr. Nixon told cheering Republicans that he would not walk away



from the job to which he had been elected. Who were these men, Rodino, John Doar, Albert Jenner, whose names we heard more and more on car radios as we waited in line for hours to get gasoline before the pumps closed? The grand jury began to dribble out information about political support by ITT and the milk operators and of campaign funds secretly diverted by Bebe Rebozo, and of a \$576,000 tax deduction on Nixon's vice presidential papers. Nothing to worry about, said Jerry Ford, just efforts by "a few extreme partisans" and a "relatively small group of political activists" to "crush" the president. Grand juries issued indictments against former top White House aides, and there were new demands for White House tapes. That called for a presidential press conference to reassure the country, and Ziegler criticized the press the next day for asking too many questions on Watergate. Couldn't reporters see that the president was doing great things for the country?

The president took his case to the people, to Chicago, Nashville, Houston. That was a brutal scene at Houston, before the broadcasters' association, where I watched Dan Rather in the public panel ask him to his face how the House could pursue impeachment when you, the person under investigation, are allowed to limit access to potential evidence? I thought the crowd was going to hiss at this harsh question: the old issue of how to treat a president. Nixon, for once, faltered; it was the only time I ever saw him falter.

But don't worry -- the president supplely yielded to the inexorable demand of Judge Sirica for documents, and Jerry Ford expressed concern that the staff of Rodino's committee "may be wanting to dictate impeachment proceedings."

The last great counter attack by Nixon, the inveterate gambler, was the astonishing televised address, April 29, when he announced that he was making public 1200 pages of transcripts of his Watergate conversations. Washington reporters stared at one another. Perhaps the old fox could exculpate himself after all; it was too risky for him to include "all the relevant portions" except, of course, the profanity. That was when "expletive deleted" appeared. The president told us what was in the tapes; his lawyer told us what was in the tapes; and then we finally got the tapes and read one of the most extraordinary sets of documents in history, the president and his pals devising amoral scenarios on how to persuade, and to fool, the public. It was a shocker for those who believed in the majesty of the White House, Haldeman and Ehrlichman interrupting and contradicting the President and Dean saying, after one cover story on national security, "I think we could get by on that."

The last desperate gamble didn't pay off. Jerry Ford declared that "the new evidence, as well as the old evidence" exonerated Nixon of any impeachable offense and the president himself went to Moscow too in one of those conveniently arranged quickies Kissinger manages so well. But, on July 19, Doar asked directly for impeachment in a devastating bill of particulars, and a week later the Supreme Court unanimously told the cornered president to turn over his last tapes.

Did we, watching the thing, expect Nixon to resign then? I don't know when I reached that conclusion; in there somewhere, of course. Before voting, Rodino's committee went on the air with its final sessions. For a while there was a little decency, a little dignity in the shameful mess. By non partisan votes they voted to impeach on three counts. The destroyed man resigned, August 9, flew to California at once where, it would appear, he physically collapsed.

Jerry Ford, good old Jerry Ford, pardoned him September 8. For crimes identified or yet to be revealed, he gave him a "full, free and absolute" pardon, sight unseen. He did this out of compassion, he said. He did it without an admission of guilt from Nixon and he gave Nixon custody of all his papers and tapes (an action since rescinded by Congress). Nixon gulled Ford and made a fool of him. But so what? As Nixon is pardoned the other defendants stand trial or have gone to jail.

JACK ANDERSON

AND THE WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

CIA lawlessness

WASHINGTON — More than two years ago, we reported that the Central Intelligence Agency was spying on private American citizens. We even quoted from one CIA memo, which contained unsubstantiated charges about the sex life of a prominent American songstress.

"A confidential source advised...that her escapades overseas and her loose morals were said to be the talk of Paris," the document reads. "The source stated that subject had a lurid sex life...and described her as a sadistic nymphomaniac..."

This kind of domestic spying by the CIA violates the law. We discussed it, therefore, with Richard Helms, who was then the CIA director.

He swore to us that the CIA did not keep regular files on American citizens. The entertainer was an exception, he said, because of her alleged activities overseas.

Now *The New York Times* has published evidence of widespread CIA spying on American citizens. Not only did Helms lie to us two years ago, but it turns out that we were high on the list of people the CIA was watching.

A CIA spokesman was quoted by the Associated Press as saying that a dossier was kept on us because we had published secret CIA documents and had blown the cover of agents abroad.

It is true that we have published newsworthy excerpts from CIA documents. But we were always extremely careful to protect the agency's sources. Indeed, we have a letter in our files from the present CIA Director William Colby, thanking us for protecting sensitive information.

The real reason the CIA spied on us, obviously, was because we wrote about their excesses. The CIA had no jurisdiction nor justification for doing this.

Even worse, the CIA's spying was a violation of the law.

And lawlessness by government is intolerable.

Maritime Muscle

Americans may be going without heat this winter, thanks to the Seafarers Union.

The Seafarers influence the energy situation by influencing Congress. In fact, they have one of the most powerful lobbying organizations in Washington.

The maritime men have now convinced the lawmakers that our gas and oil should be shipped largely on tankers with American crews, even though it is more expensive. This helps provide jobs for the seafarers, but it also helps to push up energy costs. And sometimes it keeps badly needed natural gas out of the country.

There is plenty of natural gas in Alaska, for example, and it is desperately needed in the lower 48 states. Despite the fact that the United States doesn't have a ship that can carry liquified natural gas, the government won't allow it to be carried on vessels with foreign crews.

So, while some American homes and industries suffer this winter because of the natural gas shortage, the gas from Alaska is being exported to Japan.

The union gets its favorable treatment by pouring about \$1.5 million into campaigns each election. Unfortunately for the rest of the nation, they often get their money's worth.

Brown's Boner

At the State Department, the dust is still swirling around the anti-Semitic remarks uttered several weeks ago by Gen. George S. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

While speaking at Duke University Law School, Brown deplored the strength of the Israeli lobby in America and suggested that another Arab oil embargo might "break" the

Jewish influence in the United States.

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, we have learned, has a working arrangement with the Defense Department which calls for the Pentagon to "clear" all foreign policy remarks beforehand with State.

Although Brown's unfortunate comments came in a question-and-answer session following his prepared speech, the Foggy Bottom bureaucrats are convinced the embarrassing incident could have been avoided had Brown only checked with them before shooting off his mouth about the Middle East crisis.

JFK and LBJ

The soon-to-be-published memoirs of Bobby Baker, the former Washington wheeler-dealer, contain the story of the late John Kennedy's first and only visit to the LBJ ranch. First, Johnson bored the President-elect with a tour of the cattle pastures. Next morning, LBJ dragged Kennedy out of bed to go deer hunting. Although Kennedy was a bad shot, he managed to hit a deer, but he only wounded it. Too squeamish to kill the maimed animal at close range, he stood by while Secret Service agents put the deer out of its misery.

Washington Whirl

Irreverent Democratic senators are referring to the new White House team as the "Rockaford Administration"...The Washington policeman who arrested the Watergate burglars refers to the scandal as the "Virginia Ave. Affair," after the name of the street the Watergate hotel and office building is located on...The staff of Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., is thankful that their man will be too young to run for president in 1976. The presidential fever is racing through the Senate. But the 32-year-old Biden, they point out, is constitutionally immune.

by DAN LACKEY

It had been my experience, having lived in or traveled through almost every state in the Union, that the blandest and most homogenizing features on the techno-American landscape were the characters on the sets of the local TV news programs. From Florida to Oregon, there always seemed to be an impeccably outfitted salesman, complete with madras suitcoat and ring-free collar, saturating the air waves with predictable intonations. When he had exhausted his news copy, he would exchange one quip with the local sports junkie, who would in turn proceed to read the sports copy in his own similarly predictable fashion, before tossing the quip to the Witty Weatherman. Oh, those deathly Witty Weathermen....

The studio would be spotless; the atmosphere, likewise, neat and tightly convivial.

With these expectations in mind, I was therefore pleasantly surprised to turn on my television one tranquil night soon after coming to Columbia and experience the cultural shock of the WOLO-TV news. Channel 25 more than belied the usual image of a slick machine producing pseudo-events, instead substituting, for news desks, two carefully constructed Kool-Aid stands. I had for so long turned on the local news merely for noise -- certainly never for information or entertainment -- that it was some time before I noticed that WOLO's chief announcer was unique. He was blessed -- or cursed -- with a character face that broke with the standard veneer. His nose was discreetly beaked and slightly bulbous, often adorned with a brilliant shine. To match his nose, his temperament, beneath a grave Mephistophelean voice, was insidiously comical.

I learned to spot, and chuckle with, his bits and pieces of advocacy journalism in the form of subtle facial gestures and voice impersonations. I waited for the pungent, witty, corny or risqué "funny" -- the welcome dessert at the end of an evening's dull diet of bureaucratic bulletins, the psychological summation of all the wisecracks that could have been made in the course of reporting the city's more somber business.

I became, without knowing it, a WOLO regular, one of a dedicated minority of Columbians, faithful as the once fervid fans of the fledgling New York Mets. Any fan of those fine characters whose worldly wit seems way out of proportion to their apparent community station will understand why for some months after arriving here, I was fond of authoring here and there in casual conversation an intelligent fish story in which I boasted that the first man I ever met in Columbia, South Carolina, was Mackie Quave.

If Superman were now in disguise as an anti-hero, then it seems to me that Mackie Quave would be the new Clark Kent. What a scoop, I thought, if this were true! I shared this thought with people here and there and discovered that my simple fantasy fit well with the talk of the town. I surmised that, should I conduct a man-on-the-street poll asking Columbians "Who is Mackie Quave?" it would undoubtedly produce in nine cases out of ten not only the general reply, "The man on the local news," but an additional and unsolicited observation, wry remark, or piece of rumor or gossip. It wouldn't be surprising, for the man, as a fellow out-of-towner told me, "seems to be Columbia's foremost folk hero." I finally decided -- as the saying goes -- to try to find the man behind the news.



Mackie Quave was born in Asheville, North Carolina, the hometown of his favorite author, Thomas Wolfe (who unfortunately had already left when Mackie arrived). Mackie's early-American ancestors had emigrated from Scotland. "Mackie" is his real and sole first name; he was

The humble story of 'Citizen Quave'

born with one part each of Scotch, Spanish and German blood in him -- and another part broadcaster. Growing up in the brilliant height of radio's heyday, Mackie has never aspired to anything else -- not since the age of two, when he started fiddling with his daddy's battery radio. When the kids from his school were taken on a tour of a radio station, Mackie was fascinated, and he knew absolutely that he wanted to be an announcer when he grew up. Only he couldn't wait until he grew up. He hung around the radio station the way the future mechanic hangs around the filling station. Sometimes he was allowed to touch the turntables and strap on the headset.

When Mackie was 12, he wired together a remote unit in a cigar box and took it to school for the kids to listen to. Later, he set up microphones and speakers and "played radio" in his own front yard. That Mackie was technically proficient and inventive owed no doubt to the fact that he often assisted his father, a pipe organ repairman (who, by the way, is reported to have borne a striking resemblance to Johann Sebastian Bach).

Every year, the National Forensic League sponsored a national competition for students, including a category in radio announcing. In his senior year at Lee Edwards High School, the young Quave announced to his peers in the Beaux and Belles dramatic club that he intended to win the national radio announcing class competition. The finals were held that year in Hollywood, California, and sure enough, the Asheville Times reported in June of 1939 that Mackie Quave, son of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice G. Quave of 698 Haywood Road, had won the radio announcing contest of the National Forensic League. The article also reported that the favorite son had advanced to the third round of the humorous declamation competition -- a fact that Mackie's official biographer should pounce upon, since news announcing and humorous declamation are for Mackie presently two interchangeable categories. A photo of the young winner accompanied this front-page news; he looked remarkably like a young Don Ameche.

Competition in the announcing finals gave Mackie coast-to-coast exposure, and his victory gave him the opportunity to announce the Parade of Champions over the Mutual Broadcasting Network. The National Forensic honor, however, was no springboard for instant entry into a network apprenticeship for the 16-year-old high school graduate. Mackie took a job in Asheville as a ten-dollar-a-week junior announcer and desk receptionist for WWNC, a slick 1000-watt station. Mackie watched his salary grow to a monumental twenty dollars a week over the next three years, but as opportunities were limited for a young announcer at WWNC, he defected to a competing 250-watt operation where he could do "everything in the world." Like exciting remote broadcasts from tobacco warehouses, military canteens, and Belk's Department Store during the holiday season.

For the duration of the war years, Mackie lived and worked in Asheville, but twice during this time he did flirt with the notion of breaking into network radio. During a trip to New York, he casually dropped into the NBC studios, whipped off the best audition heard that year, and was placed on the network's prestigious "New York Preferred" list. But nothing more happened.

Once back home, Mackie sent off a tape to a CBS audition panel, which included the late Edward R. Murrow. The distinguished panel sent back an instructive note to the effect that Mackie's "voice was lifeless and dull and sounded as if he were beset with hookworm." The young announcer took this advice to heart, industriously cut another recording, and sent it off to the top CBS station in the nation, WTOP in Washington, D.C. The station officials liked it and invited Mackie up for a personal audition. He accepted and arrived in Washington fearful and trembling, in a state of unabashed awe at the calibre of company he might conceivably be keeping one day. He was nervous, so nervous in fact that he froze up and took three false starts before he was finally off and reading. Mackie was, however, eventually given an "approved" rating. But that was that. Perhaps, as Mackie reflects today, he should have gritted his chattering teeth and "taken the minotaur by the horns, as it were."



In 1945, Quave came to Columbia as an announcer and program director for radio station WKIX. Columbia at that time was not the exciting, throbbing, news-choked metropolis that it is today. During his first week or ten days here, Mackie confessed, he had an inclination to run screaming out of the town. This was the home of his favorite NBC affiliate, WIS? Interesting news, however, can be uncovered in the most benign landscape, and Mackie stuck around to do it. He met "literary" and "artistic" people, some of whom he regarded as the prime movers of the city. Particularly helpful was the late Dr. Babcock of the English Department of the University of South Carolina, who arranged for Mackie to become a part-time instructor in broadcasting, despite the fact that the new faculty member had had no formal schooling since high school. Mackie taught at USC for nearly eight years.

WIS discovered the tremendous Quave voice in the stock of their competitor, and offered him the post of chief announcer, which he accepted in 1947. It was a job he would hold for nearly 16 years while progressively revealing his varied talents like a long row of face cards in a hand of gin rummy. One of those face cards was a genuine dramatic ability.



Mackie as "Cactus" Quave: something of an unofficial institution

In 1949, NBC saluted the opening of the new WIS building on Bull Street. The salute included the honor of airing the first live network feed of a dramatic show anywhere outside New York. The performance was "Desperation," and Mackie played the lead opposite actress Jan Minor. Local yokels were cast in the rest of the roles and the event was regarded as "pretty stupendous." Mackie was not in the least upstaged by his distinguished professional co-star, and he received much acclaim for his impersonation of a suicidal politician.

The network radio drama, while a special event, may be recalled as a symbolic beginning of what appears (so far) to be Mackie's most productive period -- the 1950's. And it's at this point that we might take a pitstop for editorial comment: what makes Mackie's personality interesting throughout this period is the obvious internal pull between a classic announcer and a promising, if undeveloped, character actor -- a conflict, or combination, which one sees now on Mackie's nightly newscast.

The next decade saw Quave's dendritic talent creeping up here and there on radio and television in various roles and tasks, ranging from portentous to cute. His figurative anchor throughout these years was, perhaps, his role as the "Esso Reporter" -- the announcer for the six o'clock evening news. Also, in the classical announcing vein, during the years that Columbia possessed a resident symphony, Mackie was the announcer for the annual or biennial network feed called "Orchestras of the Nation." He was regular announcer for symphonies, operas, and classical concerts, but he also had an insidious ability for characterization, impersonation, and a good ear for dialect. Over the radio he was for some years the institutional Santa Claus while doubling on television as the Chief Toymaker in a spot aired from Belk's department store. Because of the extra jokers in his deck of broadcasting cards, he found himself working in four different cultural categories -- all part of the regular schedule of a single day. There was a country and Western music show called "The Bar Q Ranch '56"; narration for a program of symphonic music; the evening news; and a vaudevillian stint as a black DJ named "MQ," spinning what were then known as "race records" for a program sponsored by Royal Crown Pomade Hair Wax. His dialect was wide-ranging and perfect. Mackie's only limitation, according to many colleagues, was that he was never quite able to promote himself as a *modern personality*, that he was considerably better when hiding behind the mask of a character.

On the early afternoon country and Western radio show, Mackie fiddled around with a Western dialect and toyed with the name of Cactus Quave. Two years later, when the new television medium had grafted itself solidly to the radio studios at WIS, the station tried out "Cactus Quave and the Bar Q Ranch" as one of its first experimental non-aired productions. In 1954, Cactus went live on the air as one of the many kiddie shows on local stations throughout the land. He played tin can Western movies, cartoons, and the Little Rascals, ad-libbing cleverly between. Reports have it that Cactus Quave first recognized the television commercial as an art and that he was a forerunner of the now

popular concept of "camp." Columbia natives now in their twenties will probably recall Cactus, along with a later-added villain, J.P. Sidewinder, as a permanent part of their childhood folklore.

Cactus was a small part of Mackie's daily work, but in terms of a career here in Columbia, it represents a chunk of almost a decade. And there is reason to believe that the show was close to Mackie's professional and emotional center of gravity. The Cactus Quave show was something of an unofficial institution. It was at the top of the local ratings until about 1960 and very popular with local sponsors. The cowboy and his villainous foil drew juvenile mobs at parades and around Christmas time usually upstaged Santa Claus. Mackie also is reported to have used enough political and sexual double entendre in his rambling Western drawl to attract a significant adult "cocktail" audience in the show's 6:00-6:30 time slot.

So the ubiquitous voice of Mackie Quave could be heard on the morning show, the evening news, "Bar Q Ranch," "MQ," symphony specials, commercials, network feeds from the Statehouse...just doing his chores. In the early 60's he had such a handle on his generous gift for improvisation that he began a little show for radio, a remote which he called "Citizen Quave" in which he wandered about town describing such sights as an empty paper bag. "Citizen Quave" was by this time an appropriately ironic title, for Mackie was an integral and entertaining part of the city's taken-for-granted life. Then, in the 1960's, his career took a different drift.



The drift was downward, one might timidly generalize. Mackie's ability may not have lost its edge, but circumstances changed.

The Cactus Quave Show, so the management thought, was heading slowly and naturally for the rocks. Ten years was considered great longevity for a kiddie show, and the station was preparing for a minor overhaul; a new personality, a Mr. Knozit or a Jolly Jim, was waiting in the wings to alienate the affections of thousands of children. There is some speculation, however, that Cactus and J.P. Sidewinder (played by Dean Poucher) had more ambitious plans for the show and even today neither scoffs at the idea that it could have been syndicated.

Poucher eventually moved his act to WCCA (now WOLO) and shortly thereafter, in 1963, Cactus followed. They set up the show at WCCA, actually formed a "corporation," and brought suit against WIS for the exclusive rights to the use of the name "J.P. Sidewinder" which WIS still employed as a "heavy" in the Cactus Kiddie replacement. The suit went on too long and came out essentially in a draw (both parties could use the name).

Legally it was something of a tempest in a teapot, since WIS soon dropped the character and the Cactus Show on WCCA soon went off the air. The UHF audience for WCCA was not large enough to sustain it. "It was sad..." recalls one of Mackie's friends in reference to the fact that Cactus and J.P. were not as widely or wildly recognized by the children at parades.

But while the idea of the lonesome and forgotten cowboy hero is a poignant story, what *was* too bad was that the split over the Cactus Show and its subsequent airing at WCCA necessitated Mackie's resignation from radio WIS, a resignation which his former colleagues think he greatly regretted.

Mackie returned to radio WQXL (formerly WKIX, with which he had first been employed) but an embarrassing political blooper - or deliberate move - on Mackie's part held up his job there for nearly a year. The incident was this: "Citizen Quave" was angered over the fact that Dewey Duckett, director of the Midlands Community Action Agency, and other blacks were lobbying against Columbia as the recipient of the All American City Award. Mackie introduced Duckett's name too close on the heels of a Halloween story about "spooks," then began an impromptu editorial, suggesting that the town folk call Duckett's house and give him a piece of their mind. Duckett and others petitioned against the station's license renewal. It was some months before Mackie received his wrist slap and WQXL resumed full programming. The incident was a potent pebble in a pond even the size of Columbia, and from it have rippled the rumors depicting Quave as a reactionary bigot.

In the next few years Mackie was responsible, along with

Dean Poucher, for some 30 regionally broadcast radio programs, mostly on "moonshine" for the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. He also produced the first accredited "file-access" series on the FBI called "The Investigators." Quave sometimes played as many as three roles in these productions and displayed an agile versatility; but it is safe to say that "Citizen Quave" was no longer taken for granted as an integral part of the local airwaves. WQXL did not gain a wide audience, and for some years, those accustomed to Mackie's high degree of "audibility" and "visibility" wondered where "he had got to."

One of those places was Educational Radio, where he did a newscast called "The Palmetto Report" and an interview show called "Off The Cuff," which often included celebrities such as Edgar Bergen. Unfortunately, some people - at least within the industry - recall as Mackie's most memorable performance of the period (1967) another "political blooper" stretched into a live television happening on a Friday night "Meet The Press" type show on ETV. The live telecast was an iconoclast's delight, especially for one weary of the hollow ritual of any sort of political press conference. Harry Dent, then chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party, was being interviewed, and Mackie, more than a little tipsy, was one of the panel. The Mr. Hyde half of "Citizen Quave" was once more in operation and was less than a gentleman and a scholar. He attacked Dent and moderator Wayne Seal with the spirit of Dan Rather and the mental mechanism of Paul Harvey. Subsequently, ETV discontinued live productions for three years.

But if Mackie's "bloopers" stand out in relief, so do his accomplishments in a career that spans thirty-five years, most of which have been in Columbia. One gets the impression - snooping around as well as one can into this man's life and times - that he is a solid talent forever capable of inventive deviations. The collective praise of Mackie's colleagues past and present makes for a kind of Hallelujah Chorus:

"Inside that mind is a fantastic brain," says Dean Poucher, Mackie's old partner on the Cactus Show. "I've always wondered why Mackie didn't write his own ticket," says Johnny Evans, formerly an announcer at WIS and now with the South Carolina Wildlife Department. "He's seen a lot of them come and go on to networks...and he was better than them all."

"He has a strong personality," says Bill Brown, now in the College of Journalism at USC. "You were aware of the fact that this was an exceptional type person."

"Mackie was -- still is for that matter -- the dean of Columbia announcers," says John Wrisley, formerly an announcer for WIS and now a freelance commercial film-maker.

"Mackie has more talent in his little finger than most people have all over," says a long-time colleague and friend, shy of being quoted. "Great voice. Great personality. He could have gone far...but he didn't."



Today Mackie is chief announcer and news director for WOLO-TV Channel 25, a station which, as I've already suggested, can hardly be accused of manufacturing slick and empty pseudo-events. On the contrary, WOLO doesn't have the luxury of packaging the news, since just getting it on the air is a towering achievement.

Since 1970, the station has fizzled off the air at least a half a dozen times, including a week last September and a special November blackout for Monday night football. When public ire was raised about the blackouts, the management finally suggested sabotage, pointing out that once the "lock was changed and a security guard employed" the trouble ceased. One local television technician, however, wryly commented that the lock and the guard "only kept the WOLO technicians away from their own equipment."

Either way, faithful fans admit that WOLO, politely referred to as "a small-market station," is better described as a "consistent hard-luck farm team."

Indeed, it is often an unintentional crunchy comedy of errors. Betting on whether a piece of WOLO news film will

Continued on page eight

Mackie Quave

(Continued from page seven)

run without a hitch is good dear family fun. Studio lights are rarely adequate and sloppy video overlays often outline a newscaster with an eerie Kirlian aura. The control operators may at any given moment conspire to make classic announcer Quave look like Mud Man or the cover of a Captain Marvel comic-book.

All these technical troubles, plus sportscaster Jerry Emanuel, WOLO's answer to the blundering, pretentious Ted Baxter on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," are background to that part of Mackie Quave viewed as "local character."

Judging from appearances, there are two halves to Mackie Quave: the "Mackie" half and the "Quave" half, and it is the "Mackie" half that most precisely fits with the WOLO "amateur hour." "Mackie" is the pompous leprechaun, dressed on all of the several days I met with him in a green sport coat and green flaired pants, ancient green sweater, and one black sock and one blue sock in a pair of Penny loafers. "Quave" is the classical radio announcer, the gentleman with the photographic memory, reknowned in broadcasting for editing his copy perfectly while reading it on the air. "Mackie" is the man who arrived just in time for the nightly news from the American Legion hut next door to WIS. "Quave" is the man with the fetish for words, a gargantuan polysyllabic vocabulary, and seven diligently studied dictionaries. "Mackie" is the man who, on the air, employs this awful form of erudition in perfectly charming sprees of "classic quotes double talk." "Mackie Quave," both halves considered is a vest pocket man with a big voice. "You youngsters and new-comers don't know that he's a great announcer," an old colleague of Quave's informed me, "He's just coasting on the nightly news, and you think he's a joke."

I recently saw Mackie as the narrator of a locally-produced award-winning documentary called "Vanishing Towns," and while he seems like a quaintly displaced person, his honest ability is certainly no joke. "Vanishing Towns" is a nostalgic look at three South Carolina towns which time has erased from the face of the earth. Mackie wanders from site to site dressed as an outdoor gentleman in a brown suede coat and alpine hat. The figure Mackie cuts here is the epitome of "Mackie Quave," the Asheville boy with an erudite streak, a combination of Dr. Frank Baxter on the Bell Telephone Science Series and the homely Ewell Gibbons on the Grape Nuts commercials.

ETV Director Dave Smalley thinks - though with a natural bias - that "Vanishing Towns" is the best thing Mackie has ever done, but Mackie speaks with most pride about a recent coup of an interview he conducted in the mountains.

"Now here was a challenge," says Mackie. "They never ever did anything with it, but ETV called me and said they wanted to interview these three old ladies who lived up on Glassy Mountain on the other side of Greenville. They make a little moonshine and the federal people look the other way and that's the way the girls make a living. They live up a road that is only one lane wide...They wear bonnets and aprons, as though out of another century. They don't have any electrical power, their running water comes through a hose in the kitchen, then drains out... They have oil lamps...and they bring in their wood on a sled..." Mackie cracked out this difficult interview with rolled up pants, barefeet, straw hat and just a slight Southern drawl.

There in the parade of news personalities rides Walter Cronkite, Grandmaster, father figure. And there following is Mackie Quave, this city's sagacious hobo, the families' tattered and torn but never forgotten teddy bear.



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Cinema

Approaching the obscene

by Venson Steadman

I manfully resist the obvious puns about the current wave of "disaster" films, but they're all quite justified. Over the past couple of weeks, Columbians have been hit simultaneously by two of these movies, *Earthquake* and *Towering Inferno*, and together they offer an instructive contrast in approaches to what is basically a pretty bad idea. Both films set out to exploit the spectacular possibilities of mass suffering and death, but the tremendous difference in the cynicism with which they do so is what makes *Earthquake* unquestionably the worst, and *Towering Inferno* probably the best of this very limited film genre.

Of course, one of the major interests of these disaster binges is, once the filmmakers have given themselves the chance to play God, who they will decide to knock off and who will be allowed to survive. Perhaps the most amusing (and exasperating) thing about *The Poseidon Adventure*, the movie which spawned our present mother lode of mayhem, was that it perversely eliminated the better members of the cast, while the characters who remained at the end were the most dispensable. When Charlton Heston gets it at the end of *Earthquake*, the act may

seem like appropriate aesthetic justice, but it goes against the usual plot expectations and says something about the attitudes behind this film.

You see, far from being the villain of the piece, Heston appears at the beginning of *Earthquake* as his typical super-masculine, larger than life protagonist and a marital victim to boot. In a half hour or so of soap operatic exposition we learn that he is a top Los Angeles architect-engineer who is caught in a sexual triangle between his possessive, schemingly bitchy wife (Ava Gardner, who by now is somewhere between an adipose Agnes Morehead and Elizabeth Taylor in her later, fleshier incarnations) and the lissome widow of a former associate (Genevieve Bujold). When the big quake finally hits, mobs of extras are wiped out with predictable insouciance, and there is the sentimental demise of Heston's fatherly boss and father-in-law (Lorne Greene), but the main characters all manage through last minute rescues and hairsbreadth escapes to survive. That is, up to the final scene: Heston is helping people out of a flood drain that is rapidly filling with water when Gardner is suddenly carried away with the current and



McQueen and Newman

he must decide between staying with Bujold, who has already gotten out, or going after his wife to save her. He goes after his wife, and they both disappear -- she presumably taking him off to hell with her.

I suppose in the film's soapy terms this mildly surprising turn of events might be considered a bit of didactic forewarning, the moral of which would seemingly be don't marry Ava Gardner. Or possibly it is intended as a philosophical expression of fate's indifference to the individual, no matter how victimized, with reference to the late 19th Century Naturalists. More likely it simply shows the filmmakers' perception of the indifference of the audience. The cynical assumption behind this movie seems to be that its viewers are more interested in visceral excitement than the human crisis of its characters, and as such are likely to get a bigger kick out of seeing Heston done in than saved.

It's an assumption that is also evident in the story itself, which is really just an excuse for some titillating viewer participation in upper middle-class decadence (Heston has sinful license with Bujold -- rendered invisible by PG -- and through most of the movie she bulges her tank top bralessly). Indeed, the whole crew -- Heston, his wife, the family corporation -- might have just stepped out of the pages of a John O'Hara novel, and surely it's not mere coincidence that producer-director Mark Robson once directed the film version of *Peyton Place*. To further the unlikelihood, scriptwriters George Fox and Mario Puzo have created in

the supporting characters a demented array of low types ranging from a Bircher-style militarist and sex pervert (Marjoe Gortner) to a black motorcycle daredevil (Richard Roundtree) to a cop on probation for excessive professional zeal (George Kennedy). No evidence of mental strain here.

And of course there is "Sensurround," which is hardly mysterious, just some extra large theatre speakers to amplify the bass. The reproduction is so distorted that the effect is not particularly realistic, but it's certainly loud, with the general suggestion of a pair of jet engines warming up in the back of the theatre. If this whole Sensurround business is something of a cheat, it merely typifies the fast-buck, exploitative psychology underlying this picture. Unlike the old Hollywood spectacles, most of which concentrated on story values with the visual effects incidental, *Earthquake* invites its audience to the slummy pleasures of a sensual trip-out without having to worry about any emotional involvement with the characters. It's the most primitive kind of come-on, and makes the relatively innocent corruption of the Louis B. Mayers and Harry Cohns look like kids' stuff. The makers of *Earthquake* are undeniably aware of this reverse evolution, this perversion of the old entertainment ideal, and their consciousness as well as their tongue-in-cheek unconcern is made clear by the tease of the final dialogue exchange:

DOCTOR (looking over the ruins). This used to be a helluva town, officer.

POLICEMAN. Ye-ah.

Compared with *Earthquake* and *Airport 1975*, *Towering Inferno* is surprisingly good; which is not to say really good, but good enough to be surprising. Rather than making its primary appeal to the senses, *Inferno* tries to connect, if not with the minds, at least with the feelings of its audience, and watching it I was repeatedly reminded of the old Fox *Titanic*. Many of us grew up on perennial TV showings of that film, and even though it doesn't look like much now, the ending, with the band sounding across the water from the doomed ship, can still grab us emotionally. Whatever its other faults (and *Titanic* was probably considered a camp spectacular when it was released), that movie briefly transcended itself and made the fate of those passengers who knew they were going to die terribly real to people.

(Continued on page ten)

STATEWIDE CINEMA

A QUICK PEEK AT MOVIES PLAYING AROUND SOUTH CAROLINA

EARTHQUAKE A monster quake eats Los Angeles in this latest "disaster" film that goes beyond offensiveness to a new level of commercial corruption. This movie is so cynically contemptuous of its audience and itself that it is hard to enjoy it, even as camp. Sensurround is a rip-off, like the rest of the picture.

TOWERING INFERNO promises to be as bad as *Earthquake*, but it turns out surprisingly well because its creators have had enough imagination to make the truly horrible events depicted emotionally meaningful. The world's tallest building is on fire, and while some escape, many die. This is probably the best of these disaster movies, although here's hoping there won't be any more of them.

THE GODFATHER, PART II is not only better than the original *Godfather*, it may be one of the most powerfully imaginative American movies ever made, recalling in size of its subject such masterpieces as *Citizen Kane* and *Intolerance*. It is basically Michael's story, but flashbacks to Vito Corleone as a child and young man transform this movie (together with its predecessor) into a unified epic of American life in the 20th century. After this film and *The Conversation*, Francis Ford Coppola is unquestionably the most exciting director now

working in this country.

THE ODESSA FILE. Jon Voight speaks like thees in this long, creaky melodrama about a German journalist searching in the early sixties for an organization of ex-Nazi SS men. Frederick Forsythe drew his novel from fact, but the movie has the characters and ideas of a forties spy picture. If they had played it that way, it might have been more fun.

THE LONGEST YARD is a roughhouse take-off on football madness that borrows freely from Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, but the changes are all to the good. Knute Rockne never saw a game like this, which pits convicts against their guards and is the funniest onscreen since *M*A*S*H*. In this case, the "Gipper" is the prisoners' pride and self-respect. A fine and funny film.

THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK is a film that tries to save the world without offending anyone, and even though it's full of reformer's zeal, its depiction of social corruption is so simplified or exaggerated that even Nixon probably wouldn't be very uncomfortable. There's something screwy (or very smart) about a film that has high school drum majorettes dancing in a pageant called "1984 is Closer Than You Think." This movie made \$11 million during its first week of release.

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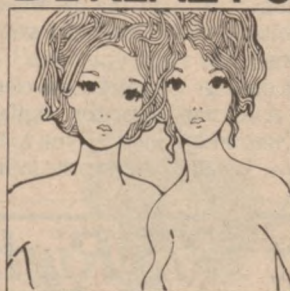
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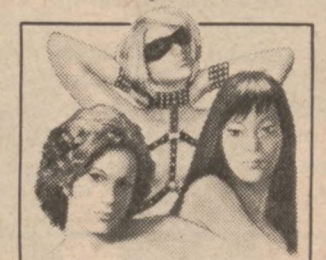
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Cinema...

(Continued from page nine)

Like *Titanic*, or like any of the current disaster films, *Towering Inferno* starts off with the ritual plot mechanics involving a maximum of characters and a minimum of characterization, and one is led to fear the worst by the familiar poster-ads in which each cast member is neatly labelled (The Builder, The Con Man, The Wife, etc.). It seems that the world's tallest building (135 stories) has been built in San Francisco by William Holden, but unbeknownst to him his degenerate son-in-law, Richard Chamberlain, has cheated on the electrical contract and the whole structure is a fire trap. By the time architect Paul Newman discovers this on the day of the building's grand opening, it is already on fire and the celebration party is trapped on the top floor, awaiting rescue by Fire Chief Steve McQueen.

All of this sounds pretty terrible, but it turns out remarkably well because someone (perhaps the director, John Guillermin) has brought to the movie a quantity of genuine feeling. There is, for example, a scene in which Newman looks down for the first time at the burned away face of a colleague, and the camera holds for an extra beat on the hurt surprise of his reaction, making the horror of the occurrence far more real than the actual sight of it. In another sequence, Robert Wagner and his secretary (Susan Frank, a pretty newcomer) have been

secretly making love in his apartment only to awaken to discover themselves trapped by the fire. The situation may be contrived, but there is a fleeting moment as these two lovers look into each other's faces with the full realization that they are about to die that approaches a kind of tragic beauty.

The ruthless economy of a movie like *Earthquake* has no time to spare for effects like these; the characters are viewed merely as hamburger to be ground up and spewed at the audience (and in one case cartoon blood supered over the picture). In *Towering Inferno*, like *Titanic*, there is a sense of real caring for the characters and sympathetic imagination for the emotions that they would be experiencing. One result of this is that the actors don't come off looking like fools, as they do in the other disaster films, but (with the exception of Chamberlain) project as real, if somewhat simplified, human beings. Particularly good are Newman, Faye Dunaway as his girl, Steve McQueen (who did on the job research for the part), and William Holden. Even Fred Astaire, who far outclasses the proceedings, makes the most of his misconceived minor role as a small-time con man.

This sense of caring reveals itself in other aspects of the production as well. William Creber's design for the tower is quite

credible, with angular interiors and scenic elevators derived from the Regency in Atlanta. The prolific film composer John Williams, who also scored *Earthquake*, has provided some fine, understated music for the backgrounds. Joseph Biroc's special effects are all careful and convincing.

Many people are killed in the course of *Towering Inferno*, but I never felt that their deaths were being used solely as cheap thrills (although one would be naive to suppose that such thrills are not part of the movie's intended appeal). It's a film that is bad in most of the usual movie ways -- the Sterling Silliphant script has some atrocious lines, and producer Irwin Allen indulges many of the cornball effects that he used so prodigally in his *Poseidon Adventure*. But *Towering Inferno* is strong in one quality that can make this kind of bonehead idea work: sincerity. Richard Lester's *Juggernaut* was the smartest of these disaster films, but it was in its own way as cynical and pointless as *Earthquake*. If *Towering Inferno* is the best of these films, it is because it has realized the necessity when dealing with such catastrophes (and particularly with such basically emotional subjects as the fear of fire and falling) to present the events with their full emotional weight, to make them completely meaningful to the audience. Anything less becomes frighteningly obscene.

Cheap Shots

(Continued from page three)

legislator, remarking on the basically rubber-stamp nature of PSC commissionership elections in the General Assembly, said of present commissioners, "I think they've pretty well got it knocked."

Nonetheless, the commissioners up for re-election don't want to fall prey to that old bugaboo, complacency. They're already on the campaign trail to resecure their \$23,000-a-year, supposedly "full-time" jobs. Yonce, for one, has already hosted a luncheon for the Richland County delegation to the House of Representatives. And according to a freshman legislator, all of the commissioners whose terms will expire shortly have sent out letters to House members.

"They say, 'Looking forward to working with you' and all that," the legislator explained.

All of which isn't unusual; some freshman legislators found that as soon as they even filed for an office, they received slews of such

"looking-forward-to-working-with-you letters, especially from judge-hopefuls. As one young representative expressed it, "There's nothing Machiavellian about it. It's just how they do things." He said the politicking is subtle -- "they don't get you in a corner and twist your arm" -- but the message is nevertheless clear.

Another legislator explained, "Everybody's inviting you to lunch now. It's the time for the lobbying

circuit." But are the tactics successful? Well, as the legislator said, "It's a lot harder to vote against someone after you've sat down and broken bread with him and shared wine." Which just proves that as far as elective tactics go, the more intimate, the better.

Who's in charge here?

Still more legislative business as usual: One of the reforms brought by Speaker of the House Rex Carter last year was to hire Charles "Bud" Ferillo as a Research

Director. Ferillo's job is to supply House members with information on which they could base their legislative decisions.

It sounds like a long needed reform, but according to a story in the December 19 *Greenville News* by News Columbia Bureau Chief Henry Eason, Ferillo may be doing his job too well. Eason pointed out that Ferrillo has been bringing facts to light that some state agency heads would rather see buried.

"Those who say this has been a legislatively-dominated state are dead wrong. This is an agency-dominated state and that will have to change," Ferillo told Eason.

Ferillo's activities, if they remain at the present level, should

provide Speaker Carter with an interesting dilemma. Obviously, agency heads who are entrenched in their bureaucratic fiefdoms don't want someone snooping around their personal domain. And it is these agency heads who are putting pressure on Carter to have Ferillo back off.

Carter's dilemma stems from the fact that Ferillo is doing his job well, but perhaps too well. Maybe Governor-elect Edwards could solve Carter's problem by removing some of those agency heads and replacing them with individuals of a different ilk.

In the meantime Carter, to his credit, has maintained the integrity of Ferillo's job and apparently will remain firm in his support of Ferillo -- and a better-informed legislature.



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Events/entertainment

continued from page 12

graduate credit; an education course, **The Teacher as Manager**, for graduate or undergraduate credit; and a history course, **Saints and Legions**, for graduate or undergraduate credit. Those interested in this program should write the Division of Continuing Education, Carolina Coliseum, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. 29208 or call 777-3808. Broadcast schedules for the college TV courses will be provided to applicants along with course material. ETV will schedule one or more repeat broadcasts of every lesson to give enrollees some flexibility in arranging study time.

music

Bachman-Turner Overdrive will be at the Charlotte Coliseum January 5 for an 8 p.m. concert. Special guest is Bob Seeger and tickets are \$5.50. For further information call the Coliseum at (704) 372-3600.

art

A retrospective survey of landscape paintings by American artist, **Edward Gay**, will be on exhibit in the East and West Galleries of the Columbia Museum of Art through January 5. Gay's favorite subject matter was things of nature and the influence of the English artist, Constable, is apparent in his attempt to pull the viewer into the landscape. Although French Impressionism gained its prominence during the height of Gay's career, he continued to paint realistically.

Nature Interlock, an exhibit by Lancaster artist Inez Plyler, will be on display at the Columbia Museum of Art January 5 through 26. Plyler uses fossils and petrified wood, along with paint, ink and charcoal, to create semi-abstractions of nature and geological formations. Plyler will be at the opening of her exhibit January 5 from 2 until 6 p.m.

An architecture exhibition, **Dismantling of a Landmark**, will be at Clemson University's Lee Hall Gallery January 5 through 31. Featured are scaled drawings of

architectural details and a photographic record of the dismantling of five New York City buildings erected in 1849. The exhibit was organized by the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit Service.

The S.C. Arts Commission's First Annual Statewide Invitational Art Exhibit will be on display at Clemson University's Lee Hall Gallery January 13 through February 9. The works of 67 native and resident South Carolina artists will be represented out of

Carolina Arts Commission, 829 Richland Street, 758-3442.

television

Saturday, January 4

1 p.m. - College Basketball, Notre Dame vs. the Maryland Terrapins at College Park, Maryland. (Channel 10)

3 p.m. - College Basketball. The Virginia Cavaliers meet the Clemson Tigers in an ACC game at Clemson. (Channel 19)

Highlight

The South Carolina Arts Commission formed statewide film circuit designed to bring the art of the short film to South Carolina and to promote the work of local independent filmmakers. Included on the circuit are the Greenville County Museum of Art, the Columbia Museum of Art, Charleston's Gibbes Art Gallery and the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. The circuit will offer a series of programs featuring non-theatrical independent filmmakers who will visit all four circuit sites to show their work and discuss individual approaches to filmmaking. There will also be several programs of short films from the collection of the American Federation of the Arts in New York City. The first program in the circuit is scheduled for 8 p.m. January 11 at the Columbia Museum of Art and will feature Gretchen Robinson of Greenville. Her film, "The People Who Take Up Serpents," is a documentary about the people of the Holiness Church of God in Jesus' Name. Other South Carolina filmmakers who will tour the circuit this spring are Mark Henrikson of Columbia whose "Hallelujah" is an animation film utilizing Edward Muybridge's photographic studies of movement; David Boatwright, also from Columbia, who will show "Maybe Next Week Sometime," a film on black music in South Carolina; and Carl Floyd of Greenville, whose "Country Fair" is a surrealistic film dealing with the "American Dream." Other artists scheduled to visit the state include Academy Award-winning filmmaker Frank Mouris, who will discuss the background of "Frank Film." Also, Packy Smith will present an evening of films from his collection of "B-Grade Western Musical" and Stan Woodward will host a program of films from the South Carolina Arts Commission's circulating "Short Film Festival." Anyone who would like further information on the film circuit should write or call Stan Woodward at the South Carolina Arts Commission, 829 Richland Street, Columbia, S.C. 29201, 758-3442.

185 artists who originally entered the competition. The purposes of the exhibit are to provide the Arts Commission's State Art Collection Committee with an adequate representation of South Carolina artists' work from which to make purchases for the collection and to mount a statewide exhibit composed exclusively of works by South Carolina artists. For further information on the Statewide Invitational Art Exhibit contact David M. Furchgott at the South

3 p.m. - Basketball. The USC Gamecocks face tough Manhattan at Carolina Coliseum. Channel 10.

8 p.m. - ABC Theatre. Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," as performed by members of Great Britain's Royal Shakespeare Company. (Channel 25)

Sunday, January 5

1 p.m. - American Bowl. The seventh American Bowl has the North meeting the South at Tampa, Florida in a battle of college All-Stars. (Channel 10)

3 p.m. - NBA Basketball. The Chicago Bulls play

the Bucks at Milwaukee's Arena. (Channel 19)

4 p.m. - NFL Championship Games. Super Bowl V: the Baltimore Colts vs. the Dallas Cowboys at the Orange Bowl (1971, rebroadcast, Channel 10).

4:30 p.m. - Wide World of Sports. Taped coverage of the October 29 Ali-Forman fight. (Channel 25)

6 p.m. - "60 Minutes." G. Gordon Liddy, one of the original Watergate defendants, is the scheduled guest. (Channel 19)

Monday, January 6

8 p.m. - College Basketball. The Gamecocks take on Fordham at Carolina Coliseum. (Channel 10)

8 p.m. - Jacques Cousteau. "The Beavers of the North Country" was filmed in the wilderness areas of Canada's upper Saskatchewan province. (Channel 25)

9 p.m. - ABC Theatre. "Ceremonies in Dark Old Men" is Lonne Elder III's off-Broadway drama of black ghetto life in Harlem in 1958. (Channel 25)

10 p.m. - "Future Shock." The technology explosion's impact on man and his environment is explored in this documentary based on Alvin Toffler's best-selling book. Orson Welles is host-narrator. (Channel 10)

Tuesday, January 7

9 p.m. - In Performance at Wolf Trap. New York City folk singer David Bromberg and colorfully costumed dancers from New Orleans are some of the performers at the 36th National Folk Festival. (Channel 35, ETV)

Wednesday, January 8

8 p.m. - College Basketball. South Carolina's Gamecocks vs. Virginia Tech's Gobblers at Blacksburg. (Channel 10)

9:30 p.m. - GE Theatre. "Miles to Go Before I Sleep," is an idealistic drama about a lonely old man trying to fulfill his life by helping a teen-age delinquent housed in a rehabilitation center. (Channel 19)

Thursday, January 9

8 p.m. - "Adventure in America." The first in a series of specials filmed across the country is about the Southern California towns of Pine Valley and Julian, whose dry woodlands have been hit by more than 500 fires. Judy Collins sings. (Channel 25)

8 p.m. - NBC News Special. "Of Women and Men" is a three-hour special about the roles of the two sexes in today's changing world. (Channel 10)

9:30 p.m. - "Benjamin Franklin: The Rebel." Richard Widmark stars in a drama that traces Franklin's transformation from a Colonial mediator to a champion of liberty. (Channel 19)

Friday, January 10

8 p.m. - Family Theatre. "The Count of Monte Cristo," the classic tale of adventure, intrigue and revenge, stars Richard Chamberlain. (Channel 10)

10 p.m. - CBS Reports. "Prescription: Take with Caution" examines the health hazards posed by drugs that are unknowingly prescribed by doctors and used improperly by patients. (Channel 19)

10:30 p.m. - "People Just Don't Whistle No More." A look at part of the heritage of Appalachia: the fiddle music brought over by English and Scottish settlers in the 1800's. (Channel 35, ETV)

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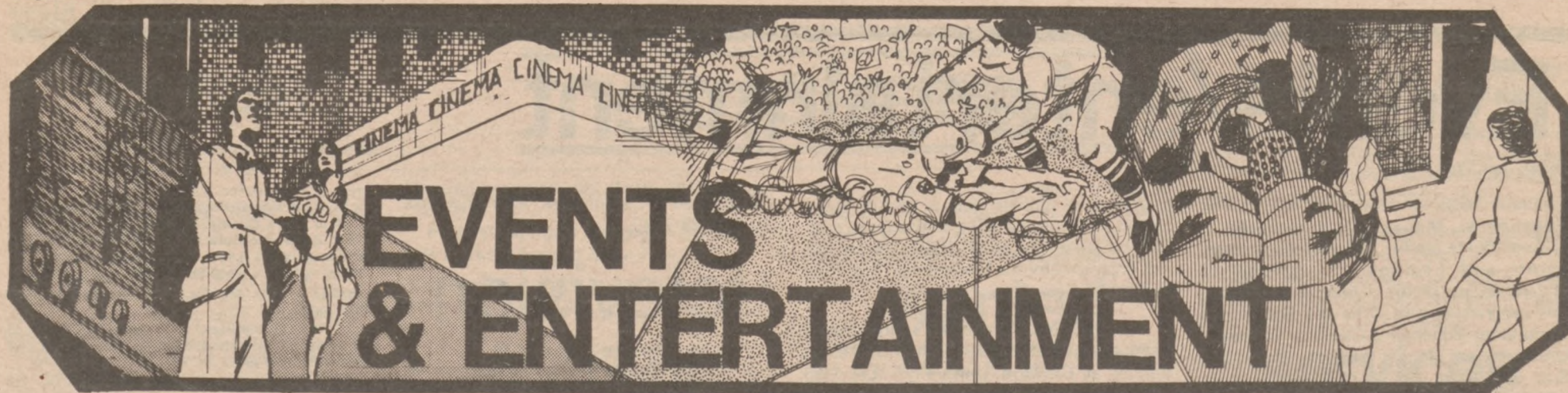
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cinema

If you're thinking of a movie, better call ahead to verify time and feature since many area theatres are subject to change after our deadline.

ATLANTIC I THEATRE, 3220 Two Notch Road, 786-0790

"Abby" is the story of a woman possessed by the Devil. Sounds like the audience is in for another exorcism. Rated R, with shows at 3:30, 5:35, 7:40 and 9:45.

ATLANTIC II THEATRE, 3220 Two Notch Road, 786-0790

"Sweet Agony" and "Little Sisters" are this week's exciting X-rated selections. Shows are continuous from 3:15 with the last complete feature at 8:45.

CAROLINA THEATRE, 1223 Main Street, 252-8011

"Uptown Saturday Night," rated PG, is a comedy starring Flip Wilson and Bill Cosby. Show times are 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

CINE-ART THEATRE, 1917 Washington Street, 779-3039

"Bordello" is this week's adult fun movie along with "Dingle-Dangle" as the second

feature. Shows are continuous from 1 p.m. with the last complete showing at 9. The 11:30 p.m. late show is "1001 Danish Delights" (January 3 and 4).

DUTCH SQUARE NORTH THEATRE, Dutch Square Mall, 789-1110

"The Dove" is supposed to be a very nice love story starring Joseph Bottoms. Rated PG with shows at 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

DUTCH SQUARE SOUTH THEATRE, Dutch Square Mall, 789-1110

"The Island at the Top of the World" is the Walt Disney film version of the Jules Verne science fiction thriller. Rated G, with shows at 1:45, 4, 6:15 and 8:30.

FOX THEATRE, 1607 Main Street, 254-5212

"The Odessa File" is based on the true story of a German journalist who discovers a new Nazi plot. Rated PG, the film stars Jon Voight. Shows at 1:30, 4, 6:30 and 9.

GAMECOCK I THEATRE, Parkland Plaza Shopping Center, 796-0022

"The Trial of Billy Jack" is still in town making Columbians cheer (according to the advertisements) and making the Laughlins very rich! Rated PG, with shows at 1:30, 5 and 8:30.

GAMECOCK II THEATRE, Parkland Plaza Shopping Center, 796-0022

"The Longest Yard" has Burt Reynolds calling the plays for the inmates in a prisoners vs. guards football clash. Rated R, show times are 2:30, 4:45, 7 and 9:15.

JEFFERSON SQUARE THEATRE, Jefferson Square, Downtown, 254-6731

"Earthquake" is here with lots of soap opera plots and big Hollywood names. The audience will not only see the action, but feel it, thanks to a new device called Sensurround. Rated PG, with shows at 2, 4:30, 7 and 9:30.

MIRACLE THEATRE, 1228 Main Street, 256-1950

"The Man With the Golden Gun," rated PG, stars Roger Moore as Agent 007. Show times are 2:05, 4:30, 7, and 9:30.

PALMETTO THEATRE, 1417 Main Street, 254-5800

"The Towering Inferno," yet another disaster flick, is here. This one is about a fire in a skyscraper and is reported to be one of the most expensive movies ever made. Stars include Paul Newman, Steve McQueen, Faye Dunaway and Fred Astaire, to name a few. Rated PG with shows at 1, 4, 7 and 10.

PLAZA III THEATRE, 1323 Main Street, 254-7960

"The Godfather Part II" is supposedly quite different from the original and much

more of a character study than a show of blood and violence. Rated R, with shows at 1, 4:45 and 8:30.

RICHLAND MALL I THEATRE, Richland Mall, 782-2228

"Freebie and the Bean" stars James Caan and Alan Arkin as a pair of whacky detectives. Rated R, show times are 3, 5, 7 and 9.

RICHLAND MALL II THEATRE, Richland Mall, 782-2228

"The Front Page" is a comedy about a couple of journalists. Rated PG, the movie stars Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau. Shows at 3:20, 5:20, 7:20 and 9:20.

classes

Beginning in January the University of South Carolina, in conjunction with the S.C. ETV Network, will broadcast four college credit courses over open-circuit television. Being offered are two political science courses, *Conversations in American Government*, for undergraduate credit, and *Problems in American Government*, for

continued on page 11

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